

Strathearn School

Pastoral Policy



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| Author: | Mrs N Sinnerton – Vice Principal |
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RATIONALE

The pastoral dimension is an expression of the care for the development, wellbeing and progress of pupils which is a fundamental priority for Schools and for staff. It offers a means to realise the educational aims of the School, to integrate and give coherence to the many different aspects of a pupil's School experience and to enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from their time in School. Styles of teaching and learning, the ethos of the School, relationships, discipline, curricular and extra-curricular opportunities all come under the aegis of the pastoral dimension.

The pastoral dimension is an integral part of the curriculum and involves everyone in the School. As it is all embracing, it is important that all the participants understand their roles, creating a supportive atmosphere within the School for both staff and pupils.

The Pastoral Policy is based firmly on the School's vision for its pupils and is the shared responsibility of all staff.

AIM

The School aims to establish an inclusive community where all pupils and staff are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of individual differences including culture, race, religion, beliefs, sexual or gender orientation, appearance and personal capability. The aim of the Pastoral Policy, is to create a caring, supportive and safe environment, which values individuals for their unique talents and abilities, and in which all our young people can learn and develop to their full potential.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a system of pastoral provision which will integrate all aspects of the School experience.
 - 1.1 To engage the active support of all staff.
 - 1.2 To develop an understanding and appreciation of the positive pastoral role of each member of staff.
 - 1.3 To establish a structure which gives confidence to staff and pupils.
 - 1.4 To agree strategies to deal with routine and with unforeseen events.
 - 1.5 To ensure that issues and unforeseen problems are dealt with at an appropriate level.
 - 1.6 To ensure feedback and evaluation of pastoral provision, from pupils, staff and parents and to modify provision in the light of regular review.

2. To ensure the protection and safeguarding of each pupil at each stage of her development.
 - 2.1 To equip all staff for the primary responsibility for the care, welfare and safety of all pupils in our charge through a robust combination of policy development, staff training, professional practice and dissemination of information.
 - 2.2 To develop induction procedures which will support pupils' wellbeing as they transfer to Strathearn.
 - 2.3 To develop links with contributory primary Schools.
 - 2.4 To develop a system of recording and disseminating necessary information about pupils so that each individual is supported appropriately.
 - 2.5 To create an environment in which pupils with special and additional education needs will receive support and guidance, so that they will be fully integrated members of the School and be enabled to reach their full potential.
 - 2.6 To develop a system for monitoring attendance which will encourage regular attendance.
 - 2.7 To make effective arrangements for first aid, illness and other emergencies.
 - 2.8 To develop links between home and School when a pupil has a long term illness and to ensure, where possible, that academic progress is maintained.
 - 2.9 To support and guide new pupils so as to give them confidence and a sense of security.
3. To recognise and value the potential of each individual pupil, acknowledging improvement and success in their achievements throughout their School career.
 - 3.1 To provide a Learning for Life and Work (LLW) programme (Key Stages 3 & 4) and a Tutorial programme (KS 5), which will enable each pupil to gain maximum benefit from her School experience and prepare her for adult life.
 - 3.2 To co-ordinate and integrate the LLW and Tutorial programmes with the academic programme, so that they will be developed and applied by subject departments and be a response to needs emerging through subject departments.
 - To ensure continuity and progression in the LLW and Tutorial programmes.
 - 3.3 To help each pupil develop the management of her learning.

- 3.4 To enable each pupil to acquire the skills necessary for learning.
 - 3.5 To encourage positive achievement and to recognise talent and reward achievement in all aspects of School life.
 - 3.6 To encourage self-motivation and to formulate strategies to reverse lack of motivation.
 - 3.7 To develop systems which will ensure feedback for pupils and parents and encourage communication between staff, pupils and parents.
 - 3.8 To offer effective careers education, advice, information and guidance (CEAIG).
 - 3.9 To establish a means whereby any pupil with anxieties or problems may approach a sympathetic adult for guidance or help.
4. To create an atmosphere and environment in which the growth of individual values, attitudes and beliefs is fostered, together with an awareness of personal responsibility and standards of acceptable behaviour. This ethos is reinforced by teaching methodology and the relationships between pupils and staff.
 - 4.1 To develop and promote positive behaviour.
 - 4.2 To ensure consistency and fairness in the implementation of the School Positive Behaviour Policy.
 - 4.3 To ensure that agreed rewards and sanctions encourage positive behaviour.
 - 4.4 To provide the best possible conditions and facilities for learning and recreation.
5. To provide the widest possible range of extra-curricular activities so as to offer opportunities for each pupil to develop her individual talents and personal qualities.
 - 5.1 To develop to the full each pupil's sporting, aesthetic and creative talents.
 - 5.2 To encourage team spirit and co-operation amongst pupils involved in activities of common interest.
 - 5.3 To foster in each pupil a sense of responsibility, initiative and a willingness to undertake tasks voluntarily and to carry them out to the best of her ability.
 - 5.4 To promote a caring and concerned attitude towards other pupils and towards the community at large.

- 5.5 To enable each pupil to understand better the society in which she lives.
 - 5.6 To help each pupil reach a realistic appreciation of her own strengths and weaknesses.
 - 5.7 To develop leisure interests and to broaden each pupil's interests and experience.
 - 5.8 To foster mature working relationships outside the classroom.
6. To promote staff development, offering support and training opportunities to all staff to enable them to meet pastoral responsibilities with confidence and competence.
- 6.1 To develop teaching methods and styles which give opportunity for the aims of the pastoral programme to be realised.
 - 6.2 To develop staff knowledge of the processes through which children learn and can be and are supported.
 - 6.3 To reach consensus among the staff on acceptable standards of positive pupil behaviour.
 - 6.4 To provide positive support for colleagues who are experiencing difficulty with a class or with individual pupils.

ORGANISATION OF PASTORAL CARE AT STRATHEARN SCHOOL

Responsibilities and Roles

Pastoral care is the concern of all staff, and the pastoral structures in School aim to support them in this overall responsibility. Form Tutors are key figures in the pastoral system and they should have a detailed knowledge of the needs, emotional development, progress and academic attainments of each pupil in their form. The Form Tutor will share information, as necessary and appropriate, with relevant members of staff.

Key staff with specific responsibilities within the pastoral context:

- Vice Principal (Pastoral) and Designated Teacher for Child Protection and Drugs
- Deputy Designated Staff for Child Protection
- Heads of Year
- Learning Support Co-ordinators (formerly Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators)
- School Health Nurse
- School Counsellor (Familyworks)

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Child Protection is an extremely important part of Pastoral Care. When abuse is suspected, or when a pupil makes an allegation that he or she is suffering or has suffered abuse, the School has a statutory obligation under the Children (N.I.) Order 1995 and in line with the requirements of the Department of Education Circular 2017/04 Safeguarding and Child Protection in Schools, to make a referral either to Social Services or the PSNI. The School will usually initially seek advice from the Child Protection Officers at the Education Authority before making a referral. The Child Protection/Safeguarding policy sets out the procedures which should be followed when reporting an incident of child abuse.

Structures

An agreed Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers has been established to ensure consistency in application of professional standards in all aspects of pupil care. Agreed policies and procedures are in place for a variety of specific areas: attendance monitoring, professional records, positive behaviour, safeguarding & child protection, control of drugs, anti-bullying, supporting under-achievement, special educational needs and inclusion, critical incidents, health issues, use of reasonable force, medication administration and accessing counselling services.

Activities

Staff are involved in the pastoral dimension both inside and outside the classroom. The relationship between pupil and staff lies at the heart of all effective learning; the best pastoral provision is evidenced in the good lesson or activity, well delivered. In addition, the School provides certain specific activities so that pupils may widen their experience and find further opportunities for personal and social development. These may be summarised as follows:

- The Form structure through which each Form Tutor has oversight of individual pupils' progress and well-being
- The Learning for Life and Work programme / Preventative Curriculum
- School Council
- Individual interviews between pupil and Form Tutor / Head of Year
- Form activities (e.g. charity efforts, assemblies)
- The House system
- Extra-curricular activities
- Community service
- Careers education, information, advice and guidance
- Posts of responsibility (e.g. office bearers, leadership committees, form captains)
- Educational visits (e.g. field trips, gallery and theatre visits, residential visits, School trips abroad)
- Public performances in music and drama
- Sports and other competitions
- Liaison with parents through individual interviews and parent consultations

LIAISON WITH PARENTS

The School is committed to building partnerships with parents in order to promote the welfare of the pupils.

Unplanned contact can be made in an informal and a formal way; parents should feel they can get in touch with School through their daughter's form tutor, Head of Year, Senior Teacher or Vice Principal directly should a pastoral problem arise, and School should be able to do the same with parents.

The Parent Forum provides a formal opportunity for parents to engage in consultation with pastoral managers in School on issues related to policy and procedures. The Forum is convened by the Vice Principal, where possible once in every term. Participation in the Forum is voluntary and open to all parents.

ParentMail is an e-mail and text messaging service which allows convenient and timely communication with parents on a range of pastoral issues as well as calendar information.

SIMS Parent App allows for communication with parents on a range of issues. Linked to the SIMS database, it allows parents access to information such as their child's attendance, reports, behaviour and achievement, timetable and diary events. Parents are also able to update personal information including home address, email and mobile telephone numbers.

Parent information sessions and consultations provide more formal and structured occasions for discussion. These have been devised with the special needs of each year group in mind, and their form and frequency are under regular review.

The current arrangements are:

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| Form 1 | Parent Information Evening in September. Consultation by appointment in December, for parents with Form Tutors on personal / social development. Additional consultation in June for parents with Subject Teachers. |
| Form 2 | Consultation by appointment in December, for parents with Subject Teachers and Form Tutors on academic progress and personal / social development. |
| Form 3 | Consultation by appointment in February, for parents with Subject Teachers, Form Tutors and CEIAG staff to discuss academic progress and subject choices for GCSE. |
| Form 4 | Parent Information Evening in September. Consultation, by appointment in January, for parents with Subject Teachers and Form Tutors on academic progress and personal / social development. |

- Form 5 Consultation by appointment in February for parents with Subject Teachers, Form Tutors and CEIAG staff to discuss academic progress and subject choices for 'AS' Level.
- Form L6 Parent Information Evening in September.
Consultation by appointment in March for parents with Subject Teachers on academic progress.
- Form U6 UCAS information evening for parents in September.
Consultation by appointment in March for parents with Subject Teachers on academic progress.

LIAISON WITH EXTERNAL AGENCIES

The School does not operate in isolation and has many contacts with outside agencies such as those listed below. School reserves the right to liaise with appropriate agencies when necessary in support of our pupils.

- Education Authority (Child Protection, Education and Welfare Service; Special Educational Needs; Statementing; Educational Psychology; Peripatetic Support Services)
- Feeder Primary Schools
- East Belfast Area Learning Community (EBALC)
- NI Careers Services
- Health Trusts (including GPs, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Family Support Intervention Teams)
- Voluntary Agencies supporting special educational needs (e.g. PEAT, Disability Action, Angel Eyes, Eastside Partnership etc)
- Gateway Services
- Young People's Centre
- Eating Disorders Unit
- Familyworks School Counselling Service
- MACS (Mental Health Support Charity)
- Nexus NI
- PSNI
- Young Enterprise
- Sentinus
- Local Nursing Home and Primary Schools (pupil volunteering opportunities)

REVIEW AND EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed at least once every two years by the Board of Governors. The policy will be kept under review by senior members of staff who will keep Governors informed of any difficulties that may arise.

RELATED SCHOOL POLICIES

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Positive Behaviour Policy

Anti-Bullying Policy

Attendance Policy

Relationships and Sexuality Education Policy

Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy

Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

Assessment Policy

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers